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INVESTIGATING THE INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF ACADEMIC LAWYERS OF KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA (HARYANA) AND CHAUDHARY DEVI LAL UNIVERSITY, SIRSA (HARYANA): A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This comparative study investigated the information seeking behavior of academic lawyers of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra and Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa. The aim of the study was to determine the law students and faculty member's academic information needs and information seeking behavior and to find out the utility of e-resources and legal databases. Further the aim of the study was also to identify the problems faced by the academic lawyers in the process of information seeking and suggest different approaches and strategies to overcome the hurdles in the way of information seeking behavior. A questionnaire was the basic method to collect the required data in this study. The study reflected that the students and faculty members used the library to satisfy their information needs. The main purpose of the students for seeking information was the preparation of examination. The internet was the major e-resources for the academic lawyers from where they got their required information. Academic lawyers were more dependent on departmental library for identifying e-resources and legal databases.

Keywords: Information Seeking Behaviour, Academic Lawyers, E-Resources

Introduction

We are living in the data age. The term 'data age' has been utilized to speak to the effects of data and correspondence innovation on each part of life. Information has now become one of the most basic needs of human being. There is no field of human activity in the world wherein information is not a component. The concept of life is vague without information. In this highly competitive environment those who possess right information at the right time will only succeed. Information has enabled a man to perform his routine activities in an efficient way. Information

professional are always keep in finding out why and how users seek information, for enhancing their information provision.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has been playing an important role in every area and every aspects of life. ICT has changed conventional libraries into electronic libraries. This has result to emerging the electronic resources and services. So many electronic resources like e-journals, e-books, e-theses & dissertations, online databases, OPAC and web based resources are available in today's libraries for the users.

Legal education played a vital role in national reconstruction, development and social change in a country. Teaching faculty teaches different area at a time and involved in different legal academic activities; therefore, their information needs are diverse and vast. Information has become a decisive parameter in the area of legal education; legal academic community is more dependent on information in comparison of other professional area. Lawful instruction assumed an indispensable function in public reproduction, advancement and social change in a nation. Encouraging staff shows distinctive zone at an at once in various legitimate scholastic exercises; in this manner, their data needs are different and immense. Data has become a definitive boundary in the region of legitimate schooling; the lawful scholastic network is more subject to data in examination of the other expert territory. Law personnel grant lawful information to the understudies' locale to furnish them with sound legitimate information and aptitudes. Data needs and data looking to conduct of scholarly legal advisors is a lot of significance due to the remarkable development of lawful writing, interdisciplinary nature of law subjects and far reaching lawful exploration exercises.

About the Universities

Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

“Kurukshetra University is a premier institute of higher learning established on 11 January 1957 in the land of 'Bhagwadgita' Kurukshetra of Haryana, 160 kilometres from the capital, Delhi. The Department of Sanskrit was the first and the only department in the university when it was inaugurated by Bharatratna Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Indian Republic. It is spread over 400 acres of land on the south bank of the holy Brahmsarovar. The University has 445 teaching faculty members. University has a central library, Jawahar Lal Nehru Library. Library has 1270 reading seat capacity. In order to provide adequate reading space golden jubilee

reading hall area was added in the golden jubilee year of the university. Library reading capacity has increased from 470 users to 1270 users. The library has over 4,00,000 books/bound volumes/theses, 300 print journals and 16000 manuscripts.”

(http://www.kuk.ac.in/information.php?m=dg==&L01_id=MQ==&L01_direction=)

Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa

“Chaudhary Devi Lal University, named after Chaudhary Devi Lal, the former Deputy Prime Minister of India was established by the Government of Haryana on April 5, 2003. The University, located at Sirsa, 256 km from Delhi. There are 16 teaching departments with 40 courses in the University. University has a central library, Vivekananda Library. The Vivekananda Library came into existence in April 2003. The Library, at present not only allows the members to borrow books or other resources but also provides well furnished and peaceful reading rooms. To cater the needs of the students, teachers, research scholars and staff, the University Library possesses a very rich collection of 53875 books, 4000 theses & dissertation, 18 magazines, 15 newspapers and 110 journals. Library has also the membership of UGC-INFONET digital library consortium, DELNET, e-books and open access e-resources and e-journals databases”. (<http://cdlu.ac.in/introduction.aspx>)

Review of Related Literature

Maamiry (2017) conducted a study on information seeking behaviour of students of the colleges of Business of Administration and college of Information Technology under the University of Dubai. The study found out the student’s information needs, information seeking behaviour, difficulties in utilizing e-resources and problems in searching online databases. The Majority of the students (83%) used electronic resources as primary resources of information for preparing their assignments. Students visited the library frequently to improve their performance and they spend more time in searching e-information related their fields. The students used commercial websites to satisfy their information needs instead of interactive with academic databases. Most of the students used databases recommended by their instructors. The study also revealed that the students faced difficulties in choosing databases, identifying reliable articles, lack of searching skills and lack of qualified staff. **Padma and Ramasamy (2017)** investigated the information seeking behavior of lawyers, Madurai District Court, Tamilnadu. The study exposed the

importance of information for legal professionals. The majority of the respondents (90.13%) were male respondents. Most of the respondents (46.09%) had specialization in civil cases, whereas 40.79% respondents had the specialization in criminal cases. Lawyers were mostly dependent on library to get their required information regarding case preparation and improving their knowledge. Lawyers also used library to remove their doubts about legal and judicial procedures. The study also revealed that the legal professionals were satisfied about the availability of print information resources available in the library of Bar Association. **Bhatt (2014)** in his article “Information needs, perceptions and quests of law faculty in the digital era” searched out that libraries play a very crucial role in supporting legal research and legal education. The aim of this paper was to ascertain the law faculty members’ information needs and information seeking behaviour to provide library services and resources in a better way. The study revealed that law faculty members used variety of information sources in order to complete their academic, research and teaching work. They used books, journals, statutes and law reports as print resources to meet their information needs. They also used IT- based library resources. Heinonline was the most preferred online databases, followed by Manupatra and Westlaw India online databases. It was found that most of the respondents used internet- based items more than the conventional documents to satisfy their information requirements. **Girija (2014)** explored the information needs and information seeking behaviour of students of teacher education institutions in internet usage. It was found that most of the students did not use library and information sources available in the library due to some technical problems. It was observed that they had lack of awareness of library resources. It was pointed out that 94% students used the internet for education purposes, 55% of them used internet for news, 53% used for entertainment and 30% students used internet for sports purposes. It was found that majority of the respondents used search engine Google frequently for their required information while using internet.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the purpose of information seeking behavior of academic lawyers
2. To find out the frequency of library visit
3. To find out the use of different types of e-resources
4. To find out the use of different channels for identifying e-resources
5. To find out the use of legal databases by academic lawyers

6. To find out the problems faced by the academic lawyers in using information in digital environment

Scope

The scope of the study was limited to the information seeking behavior of academic lawyers of Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra and Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa. In the study the users comprises LLB, LLM students, research scholars and faculty members.

Research Methodology

The present study was based on survey research. Questionnaire method was the main instrument for the data collection. The questions were designed according to the objectives of the study. The total population of the study was around 2000 including the students and faculty members. There are approximately 1000 students and 20 faculty members in KUK, 960 students and 26 faculty members in CDLU. 200 questionnaires per university were personally distributed to the faculty members and students. Out of 200 questionnaires distributed in KUK, 175 questionnaires were received back with the response rate of 87.5% and out of 200 questionnaires distributed in CDLU, 189 questionnaires were received back with the response rate of 94.5%.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Universities	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
KUK	83	47.4	92	52.6	175	100.0
CDLU	121	64.0	68	36.0	189	100.0
Total	204	56.0	160	44.0	364	100.0

Table No. 1 shows that in KUK, 47.4% respondents were male and 52.6% were female, whereas, in CDLU, 64.0% respondents were male and 36.0% were female. Overall, 56.0% male and 44.0% female respondents were taken from both the university.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Universities	Below 25		26 – 30		31 – 35		36 – 40		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
KUK	117	66.9	20	11.4	10	5.7	28	16.0	175	100.0
CDLU	121	64.0	50	26.5	13	6.9	5	2.6	189	100.0
Total	238	65.4	70	19.2	23	6.3	33	9.1	364	100.0

Table No. 2 reflects that maximum respondents (66.9%) of KUK were below the age of 25 years and maximum respondents (64.0%) of CDLU were also below the age of 25 years. In KUK, 16.0% respondents were the age group of 36-40 years, 11.4% were the age group of 26-30, and 5.7% respondents were the age group of 31-35 years. In CDLU, 26.5% respondents were the age group of 26-30 years, 6.9% were the age group of 31-35 and 2.6% respondents were the age group of 36-40 years.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Status

Universities	LLB Students		LLM Students		Research Scholar		Faculty		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
KUK	113	64.6	40	22.9	4	2.3	18	10.3	175	100.0
CDLU	149	78.8	20	10.6	5	2.6	15	7.9	189	100.0
Total	262	72.0	60	16.5	9	2.5	33	9.0	364	100.0

Table No. 3 indicates that maximum respondents (78.8%) of CDLU were LLB students and maximum respondents (64.6%) of KUK were also LLB students. The table further shows that in KUK, 22.9% respondents were LLM students, 10.3% were faculty members and 2.3% were research scholar. Whereas, in CDLU, 10.06% respondents were LLM students, 7.9% were faculty members and 2.6% were research scholar. Overall, 72.0% respondents of both the universities were LLB students. It was because the strength of LLB students of both the universities was higher than the strength of LLM students, research scholar and faculty members.

Table 4: Frequency of the Library Visit

Universities	Number & %	Daily	Weekly	2-3 Times in a month	Once in a month	Total
KUK	n	76	80	12	7	175
	%	43.4	45.7	6.9	4.0	100
CDLU	n	95	72	20	2	189
	%	50.3	38.1	10.6	1.0	100
Total	n	171	152	32	9	364
	%	46.9	41.8	8.8	2.5	100

Table No. 4 reflects that how often academic lawyers visited the library. It was found that maximum number of respondents (50.3%) of CDLU visited the library daily, whereas, maximum number of respondents (45.7%) of KUK visited the library weekly. The present study further

reveals that in KUK, 43.4% respondents visited the library daily, 6.9% visited the library 2-3 times in a month and 4.0% visited the library once in a month. In CDLU, 38.1% respondents visited the library weekly, 10.6% respondents visited the library 2-3 times in a month and 1.0% respondents visited the library once in a month.

The above study shows that the students of the both the universities visited the library on daily basis as well as on weekly basis.

Table 5: Purpose of Seeking Information

Purposes	No. & %	KUK N=175				CDLU N=189			
		F	S	R	N	F	S	R	N
Research Work	N	81	55	30	9	24	74	37	54
	%	46.3	31.4	17.1	5.1	12.7	39.2	19.6	28.6
Planning the New Projects	n	37	93	19	26	24	74	52	39
	%	21.1	53.1	10.9	14.9	12.7	39.2	27.5	20.6
Preparation for Examinations	n	87	74	7	7	102	64	16	7
	%	49.7	42.3	4.0	4.0	54.0	33.9	8.5	3.7
Participating in Seminars/ Conferences	n	72	66	28	9	25	97	35	32
	%	41.1	37.7	16.0	5.1	13.2	51.3	18.5	16.9
Moot Courts	n	80	61	22	12	27	65	44	53
	%	45.7	34.9	12.6	6.9	14.3	34.4	23.3	28.0

Academic lawyers were asked to indicate their purpose for seeking information. Table No. 5 reveals that maximum percentage of the respondents (54.0%) of CDLU sought information frequently for preparation of examinations, whereas, maximum percentage of the respondents (53.1%) of KUK sought the information sometimes for planning the new projects. For the purpose of research work, 46.3% respondents of KUK searched information frequently while 39.2% respondents of CDLU searched the information sometimes for the same purpose. For the purpose of participating in seminars/ conferences, 51.3% respondents of CDLU sought the

information sometimes whereas 41.1% respondents of KUK sought the information frequently for the same purpose. From KUK, 45.7% respondents sought the information frequently for the purpose of moot courts and 34.4% respondents of CDLU sought the information sometimes for the same purpose.

Table 6: Use of Different Types of E-Resources

E-Resources	No. & %	KUK N=175				CDLU N=189			
		F	S	R	N	F	S	R	N
E-Journals	n	79	52	18	12	51	81	14	17
	%	49.1	32.3	11.2	7.5	31.3	49.7	8.6	10.4
E-Books	n	74	34	19	28	65	78	11	12
	%	47.7	21.9	12.3	18.1	39.2	47.0	6.6	7.2
E-mail	n	103	41	16	9	101	47	17	16
	%	60.9	24.3	9.5	5.3	55.8	26.0	9.4	8.8
Social Websites	n	84	57	18	6	100	44	17	8
	%	50.9	34.5	10.9	3.6	59.2	26.0	10.1	4.7
Internet	n	108	31	14	3	124	33	11	6
	%	69.2	19.9	9.0	1.9	71.3	19.0	6.3	3.4

Table No. 6 shows the frequency of using e-resources by academic lawyers. Maximum percentage of respondents (71.3%) of CDLU used internet frequently followed by 69.2% of KUK. E-journals were used sometimes by 49.7% respondents of CDLU, whereas, e-journals were used frequently by 49.1% respondents of KUK. From KUK, 47.7% respondents used e-books frequently while 47.0% respondents of CDLU used e-books sometimes. E-mail was used frequently by the 60.9% respondents of KUK followed by 55.8% respondents of CDLU. From CDLU, 59.2% respondents used social websites frequently followed by 50.9% respondents of KUK. Overall, we can say that all e-resources were used frequently and sometimes by the majority of the respondents of both the universities of Haryana included in this study.

TABLE 7: Use of Different Channels for Identifying E-Resources

Channels	No. & %	KUK N=175				CDLU N=189			
		F	S	R	N	F	S	R	N
University Main Library	n	78	65	21	11	90	79	18	2
	%	44.6	37.1	12.0	6.3	47.6	41.8	9.5	1.1
Departmental Library	n	123	31	10	11	143	38	8	0
	%	70.3	17.7	5.7	6.3	75.7	20.1	4.2	0.0
Cyber Cafe	n	46	71	34	24	51	69	28	41
	%	26.3	40.6	19.4	13.7	27.0	36.5	14.8	21.7
Personal Communication with Friends	n	74	78	14	9	108	49	20	12
	%	42.3	44.6	8.0	5.1	57.1	25.9	10.6	6.3
Home Access to the Internet	n	99	58	12	6	108	53	13	15
	%	56.6	33.1	6.9	3.4	57.1	28.0	6.9	7.9

Table No. 7 shows that how academic lawyers used different channels for identifying e-resources. Maximum number of respondents (75.7%) of CDLU consulted their departmental library frequently followed by 70.3% of KUK. University main library was used frequently by the 47.6% respondents of CDLU followed by the 44.6% respondents of KUK. From KUK, 40.6% respondents used cyber cafe sometimes followed by the 36.5% respondents of CDLU. From CDLU, 57.1% respondents did the personal communication with their friends frequently while 44.6% respondents did the personal communication with friends sometimes. From CDLU, 57.1% respondents used internet at their homes frequently followed by the 56.6% respondents of KUK.

Table 8: Use of Online Database

Online Database	No. & %	KUK N=175				CDLU N=189			
		F	S	R	N	F	S	R	N
Westlaw	n	32	67	45	31	34	72	20	63
	%	18.3	38.3	25.7	17.7	18.0	38.1	10.6	33.3
Manupatra	n	43	64	44	24	36	61	22	70
	%	24.6	36.6	25.1	13.7	19.0	32.3	11.6	37.0
UGC-Infonet database	n	31	44	42	58	32	62	40	55
	%	17.7	25.1	24.0	33.1	16.9	32.8	21.2	29.1
SUPLIS	n	17	38	49	71	5	39	45	100
	%	9.7	21.7	28.0	40.6	2.6	20.6	23.8	52.9
JURIX	n	22	43	45	65	20	37	43	89
	%	12.6	24.6	25.7	37.1	10.6	19.6	22.8	47.1
LexisNexis	n	46	51	28	50	26	43	35	85
	%	26.3	29.1	16.0	28.6	13.8	22.8	18.5	45.0

Table No. 8 shows the frequencies of online databases that were used by academic lawyers. The maximum percentage of respondents (38.3%) of KUK used Westlaw online database sometimes followed by 38.1% respondents of CDLU. Manupatra online database was used sometimes by the maximum number of respondents (36.6%) of KUK followed by 32.3% respondents of CDLU. The maximum percentage of respondents (32.8%) of CDLU used UGC- INFONET database sometimes followed by 25.1% respondents of KUK. From KUK, 21.7% respondents and from CDLU, 20.6% respondents used SUPLIS database sometimes. JURIX database was used sometimes by 24.6% respondents of KUK and 19.6% respondents of CDLU. LexisNexis was used sometimes by 29.1% respondents of KUK and 22.8% respondents of CDLU.

Table 9: Problems in the Use of E-Resources

Problems	No. & %	KUK N=175	CDLU N=189
		F	F
Too much E-information is available	n	62	73
	%	35.4	38.6
Shortage of Computer	n	56	110
	%	32.0	58.2
Lack of Internet facility in the Department	n	35	76
	%	20.0	40.2
Lack of Training	n	67	92
	%	38.2	48.6
Lack of Legal Databases	n	55	97
	%	31.4	51.3
Slow Speed of Internet Connection	n	83	144
	%	47.4	76.1

Table No. 9 shows the problems faced by academic lawyers during the use of e-resources. Maximum number of respondents (76.1%) of CDLU, and 47.4% of KUK had complaint about the slow speed of internet while using it. 58.2% respondents of CDLU and 32.0 % respondents of KUK faced the problem of shortage of computers. From CDLU, 51.3% respondents and from KUK, 31.4% respondents had complaint about the lack of legal databases. Lack of training was also a problem that was faced by 48.6% respondents of CDLU and 38.2% respondents of KUK. Lack of internet facility in the department was also mentioned as a problem by 40.2% respondents of CDLU and 20.0% respondents of KUK. From CDLU, 38.6% respondents and from KUK, 35.4% respondents had complaint that a lot of unnecessary e-information appeared while searching information on the internet.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The present study reveals the academic lawyers' information skills, explored the e-resources and locations they use for information search. The study indicates that the academic lawyers are much diversified in the information seeking, the resources they access and the use they make of the information. Information needs of academic lawyers are different but they rely heavily on law journals, text books, law reports and internet. It has been observed that academic lawyers use

a wide range of e-resources and services while seeking information. The study shows that majority of the respondents visit the library daily and weekly. The findings of the study indicate that most of the respondents seek information for examination and new projects. Internet has attracted the attention of the academic lawyers for seeking information. Majority of the respondents are aware regarding e-resources and they widely use internet to satisfy their e-information needs. The results of the study show that maximum respondents from both the universities are not good in using online legal databases, because they have lack of knowledge of accessing these online legal databases and therefore, most of the students depend on law departmental library for getting required information.

To satisfy the legal information needs of academic lawyers, the appropriate resources should be made available to them and internet facility should also be improved. Since the academics lawyers of both the universities faced the problems in accessing the available e-information sources and legal databases, it is suggested that Orientation Programmes and information literacy programmes should be organized in order to acquaint the academic lawyers of using the effective search strategies. Librarians should also provide assistance to the academic lawyers in order to learn the use of e-resources.

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